

## FIELD TRIPS

1970-1971

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**January 25, 1970:** Shark River Inlet to Island Beach State Park, New Jersey. Under the able leadership of Alan Brady some 25 observers scoured the ponds, inlets, jetties, and beaches for waterfowl and other birds. There were many Canvasbacks along the Coast. The day's highlight came early—a male Barrow's Goldeneye at Shark River. A female Harlequin Duck was off a jetty just north of the inlet. Two European Widgeon were seen, one at Shark River and the other near Manasquan. Land birds of interest included five Lapland Longspurs near Spring Lake and a group of about 15 Redpolls near Wreck Pond. The expected Great Cormorants, a half dozen or so in all, were off the southern end of Island Beach.

Although skies were overcast during the day, the observers were very thankful for the lack of wind.

**February 21-22:** Long Island, New York. Under the leadership of Richard Plunkett, National Audubon Society staff, 20 DVOC members and three guests met Saturday morning at the Jamaica Bay Refuge. The puddle ducks were good, but the best bird was a Long-eared Owl just off the highway behind the parking lot.

At Shinnecock Bay there were hundreds of Sanderling and Dunlin.

Late afternoon birding at the Montauk Point lighthouse was difficult because of the strong wind. The group was back at the point at sunrise on Sunday, and both eiders, all three scoters, and a Gannet were seen. The Great Cormorant was common along the jetties around Sag Harbor.

**March 15:** Penn Manor—Churchville area, Pennsylvania. Robert Sehl and company had things under control at Penn Manor. "Staked out" for everyone to see were a Red-necked Grebe, several Whistling Swans, European Widgeon, Iceland Gull, and Common Redpolls.

Alan Brady had a Long-eared Owl waiting at Newtown. Rusty Blackbirds were also seen just outside town.

At Churchville Reservoir Lester Thomas also had several Long-eared Owls plus Canvasback, Ring-necked Ducks, and a Red-shouldered Hawk. The day was sunny and mild with 20 members participating.

**April 25-26:** Ocean City and Elliott Island, Maryland; Pocomoke Swamp, Maryland; Chincoteague, Virginia; Bombay Hook Refuge, Delaware, and other Delmarva localities.

Approximately 50 members were present to enjoy a mild warm weekend and a total of 202 species. Highlights included five species of rails at Elliott Island (but no Yellow Rail), Roseate Tern at Fenwick Island, Gull-billed Tern at Indian River Inlet, two Golden Plover at Bombay Hook, Black-necked Stilts at Port Mahon, Pigeon Hawks at Ocean City and Cape Henlopen, a Red-headed Woodpecker at Gum Point Road, and five Gannets from the Cape May-Lewes ferry.

The Swainson's Warbler was heard by a number of people but seen by only a few at Pocomoke Swamp. Land birds and waterfowl were fairly abundant, but shorebirds were scarce.

**May 10:** 38th Spring Round-up. A clear, warm, and sometimes hot spring day saw twelve groups identify 247 species, a DVOC high. Areas covered extended from Bucks County, Pa. and Trenton Marsh south to Ocean City, Maryland, and from the Pocono Mountains east through the New Jersey pine barrens to Brigantine and Cape May. The Cutler party was the most successful, with a high of 201 species. A high warbler count of thirty species was reported by the John Miller-Edward Rigby group who beat the bushes in the Tinicum Refuge-Delaware County area.

Birds of special interest included two Red Crossbills, Black Rails, two Harlequin Ducks, Avocets, and five Bald Eagles seen by three groups. A Yellow-headed Blackbird was seen by Walt Lipski the day before but missed on the count.

**June 21:** South Jersey (for breeding birds). Seven members and five guests birded Indian Trail Road between Routes 47 and 9, the Stone Harbor causeway, and the beach south to Hereford's Inlet. The day was warm and cloudy, with a heavy shower in the early afternoon. Warbler species, numerous in the wooded area along the Indian Trail Road, were Black and White, Pine, Prairie, Ovenbird, Kentucky, Yellowthroat, Hooded, Blue-winged, and Redstart. The tern colonies in the dunes below Stone Harbor were found to be less populated than

in previous years, and at the same time gulls, particularly the Great Black-backed, were abundant. Seven Oystercatchers and twelve Knots were seen on the mud flats above Hereford's Inlet.

**September 13:** Bake Oven Knob, Pennsylvania. This was an early visit to the Knob, but six members enjoyed the balmy weather. The hawks were sporadic, but those observers who remained were satisfied. The flight included seven Sharp-shinned Hawks, two Red-tailed Hawks, 98 Broad-winged Hawks, six Marsh Hawks, and 12 Ospreys. The warblers observed included Black and White, Nashville, Myrtle, Black-throated Green, and Redstart.

**October 3-4:** Barnegat Light to Cape May Point, New Jersey. The weather was clear, but strong southeast winds (small craft storm signals were flying) precluded a boat trip outside the inlet. Eleven observers tested their sea legs within the bay and came within fifteen feet of an immature male King Eider. A Peregrine Falcon overtook the boat on the way back to the dock. There were many Royal Terns in the area.

The stop-off at Brigantine Refuge produced 12 Snow Geese and 43 Avocets.

Ten members enjoyed the Brady facilities in Cape May Point on Saturday evening. Sunday morning was clear and windy, and there was a fine hawk flight. Included were 1200 Sparrow Hawks, three Pigeon Hawks, three Peregrine Falcons, 1000 Sharp-shinned Hawks, two Cooper's Hawks, one Red-tailed Hawk, three Marsh Hawks, three Broad-winged Hawks, and eight Ospreys.

There were also two Common Eiders in the surf at the Point.

**November 1:** Bake Oven Knob, Pennsylvania. Good weather brought out twelve members for this trip. Hawks observed included one Goshawk, eight Sharp-shinned Hawks, 64 Red-tailed Hawks, 35 Red-shouldered Hawks, a Rough-legged Hawk (light phase), and two Marsh Hawks.

**December:** Christmas Counts. The Central Bucks County count yielded 71 species, and there were 82 varieties, including a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, on the Lower Bucks County count, also taken December 26. In Delaware County 109 species, including a Wood Thrush, were reported. Gloucester County, New Jersey, reported 83 species. At Bombay Hook 137 species were seen. As usual, Cape May produced the highest local count, 148 species. A highlight there was a Black Rail. At Oceanville, New Jersey, a record 133 kinds were reported, including a Western Tanager.

**January 24, 1971:** Shark River Inlet to Barnegat Light, New Jersey. The weather was cold, windy, and partly cloudy. Seventeen members and four guests enjoyed a productive day. Among the ducks seen were a pair of Barrow's Goldeneyes and a European Widgeon. One raft of approximately 3000 Canvasbacks also included some 300 Redheads. All the mergansers were observed, and all three scoters were in the ocean beyond Shark River Inlet.

About a mile down the coast a female Harlequin Duck was in the surf alongside the sunken freighter. One Iceland Gull was also seen.

**February 12-15:** Cape Ann, Massachusetts, and mini-cruise to Nova Scotia. The high point of the Club's annual mid-winter trip to Massachusetts and the Maine coast was the overnight cruise on the "Prince of Fundy" from Portland, Maine, to Yarmouth, Nova Scotia. The early morning arrival at Yarmouth and the return to Portland provided lots of birding for those among the 14 members and eight guests who were not indisposed.

The "salts" had fun counting Fulmars (60 plus) on the return trip in spite of the cold, windy, and rough weather. There were also Kittiwakes, a few Dovekies, Razorbills, and one Puffin. There were several Black-headed Gulls in Yarmouth Harbor and also a Glaucous Gull and an Iceland Gull.

The river at Newburyport provided six Barrow's Goldeneyes, and there were two Snowy Owls at the Parker River Refuge.

The coastal birding produced King and Common Eiders, Harlequin Ducks, plus the usual assortment of grebes, cormorants, more common ducks, and geese.

**March 21:** Gloucester and Salem Counties, New Jersey. Some thirty members and guests participated on this field trip ably led by William Middleton, George Hitchner, and Edward Manners. Three species of owls were observed, a single Long-eared at National Park, a single Saw-whet at Thorofare, and a nesting Great Horned near Hancock's Bridge. A number of waterfowl varieties were seen, especially in the Mannington Marsh area near Salem. Whistling Swans and Canada Geese were common. A few early shorebirds also were seen.

A feature of the trip enjoyed by all participants was the employment of a two-way radio system when the cars were travelling between birding locations.

**April 23-25:** Ocean City and Elliott Island, Maryland; Pocomoke Swamp, Maryland; Chincoteague, Virginia; Bombay Hook Refuge, Delaware, and other Delmarva localities.

Only sixteen observers braved the cold and windy weekend weather. A low 166 species were reported, and numbers of individual species were low.

For most, the best bird was again conspicuous by its unwillingness to show itself. Only a few were lucky enough to see the Swainson's Warbler. Waterbirds and shorebirds were reported in average numbers. Black-necked Stilts were seen at Port Mahon, and a Ruff at Bombay Hook Refuge was enjoyed by those observers fortunate enough to see it.

**May 9:** 39th Spring Round-up. For most observers the day was wet and cool, although the Delmarva safaris reported fair weather. Twelve groups reported a total of 242 species, the fourth best count in spite of the dripping clouds. The Reimann-Tracy party won top honors with 180 species. They put in 18 hours traveling from Bucks County, Pa., to Ocean City, Maryland. The highest warbler count was again made by the John Miller-Edward Rigby group with 25 species. Some interesting observations during the day included Red Crossbill, Black Rail, Baird's Sandpiper, and Peregrine Falcon. No Bald Eagles were sighted.

**June 20:** Cape May Point, New Jersey, and vicinity. Twelve members and four guests enjoyed a balmy morning of wildflower identification and birding under the leadership of William Bailey. Approximately 100 species of flora were observed, including eight varieties of clover, three different cranesbill, White-fringed Orchis, Swollen Bladderwort, Spotted Wintergreen, five violets, Blue Toadflax, and Bastard Toadflax.

The best birds, all at the Point, were Sooty Shearwater, Cory's Shearwater, Wilson's Petrel, Parasitic Jaeger, and Woodcock.

**October 2-3:** Barnegat Light to Cape May Point, New Jersey. The weather on Saturday was mainly warm and sunny, and sixteen members and one guest (Hugh Kingery of Denver, Colorado) began the day by identifying five King Eiders (one adult male, one imm. male) at Barnegat Inlet opposite the lighthouse. There were also many Royal Terns.

A number of shorebirds, including five Oystercatchers, were present at Tuckerton. The Sharp-tailed Sparrows were also abundant and in good color. One Peregrine Falcon was seen.

Overnight accommodations at Brady's Barn featured a ham and seafood menu.

Sunday at Cape May Point was warm and partly cloudy. The hawk flight was good, especially in the late morning near Higbee's Beach. Noted were seven Ospreys, six Peregrine Falcons, 11 Pigeon Hawks, eight Cooper's Hawks, a Red-tailed Hawk, four Broad-winged Hawks, eight Marsh Hawks, and the usual abundance of Sharp-shinned Hawks and Sparrow Hawks.

**November 7:** Bake Oven Knob, Pennsylvania. On a number of occasions this late trip to Bake Oven Knob has been a bone-chilling experience, and today's trip was no exception. Although there was rain overnight, the day was clear with strong northwest winds a feature. Seven members and five guests enjoyed some excellent birds: five Golden Eagles (one adult), 394 Red-tailed Hawks, 12 Red-shouldered Hawks, five Sharp-shinned Hawks, two Goshawks, and an Osprey.

Also seen were approximately 200 Canada Geese, two Loons, and 12 Evening Grosbeaks. Flying very high were two separate groups of Whistling Swans, about twenty birds in each group.

**December:** Christmas Counts. The DVOC was well represented on the various Christmas Counts held locally. The results of these counts generally reflected the mild fall weather conditions. Sixty-eight species were seen on the December 18 Central Bucks County count, with a Cape May Warbler being the highlight. Eighty-seven species were seen on the Lower Bucks County count held December 26. Among the 97 varieties seen on the Delaware County count were a Snowy Owl and a Black and White Warbler. In Gloucester County, N.J., 88 species were seen, including a Black-headed Grosbeak at a feeding station. At Oceanville (Brigantine), N.J., 125 species were seen on December 18, with a Common Teal, a Swainson's Thrush, and a Western Kingbird among the highlights. At Bombay Hook Refuge a record 140 species were seen, with the Glossy Ibis being new to the count. Cape May, N.J., produced 146 varieties (including the Monk Parakeet). Other highlights there included two Western Kingbirds and six Laughing Gulls.